

broadcast facility for controlling switching/routing functions in both said downstream and upstream communication channels, a method of transmitting data from a transmitter node of said network to a receiver node of said network, said method comprising:

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transmitting a series of data packets from said transmitter node to said receiver node wherein respective ones of said data packets include sequence numbers indicative of a succession of data packets transmitted from said transmitter node,

generating acknowledgment packets that contain information indicative of successive ones of data packets successfully received at said receiver node, and

suppressing the return transmission of at least a portion of said acknowledgment packets from said receiver node to said transmitter node wherein at least one unsuppressed acknowledgment packet that is transmitted to said transmitter node has a sequence number embracing sequence numbers contained in suppressed ones of said acknowledgments.

16
2
40. (New) An asymmetric communication system for enabling communication between a host computer and plural remote clients over a shared medium, said system comprising:

1
upstream and downstream channels that operate at one of different respective speeds and different protocols;

said plural remote clients being operable for communication with the host

computer over said shared medium wherein said host computer transmits data packets to said plural remote clients over said downstream channel according to a downstream channel protocol and said plural remote clients transmit data packets to said host computer over an upstream channel according to an upstream channel protocol; and

a network manager located at a head end facility for managing both said upstream and downstream channels, said network manager being operable:

for effectuating generation acknowledgment packet of data packets successfully received by said receiver node,

for effectuating transmission of data packets from a transmitting end of the network to a receiver node located at a receiving end of said network wherein said data packets include indicia for identifying respective ones of said data packets, and wherein said receiver node includes a return-transmit buffer for holding at least one acknowledgment packet for transmission to said transmitter node, said acknowledgment packet identifying a sequence of data packets successfully received by said receiver node, and

for discarding acknowledgment packets that contain information indicative of information contained in other acknowledgment packets to be sent to said host computer.

41. (New) The system as recited in claim 40 wherein said downstream channel

resides in said shared medium, and wherein said shared medium comprises one of a wireless broadcast network, a direct broadcast satellite network and a CATV network, and said upstream channel resides in one of a wireless return network, a PSTN, a return-on-cable network and a router return network.

① 2/20/08 18/ 42. (New) The method as recited in claim 39 wherein said downstream channel resides in said shared medium, and wherein said shared medium comprises one of a wireless broadcast network, a direct broadcast satellite network and a CATV network, and said upstream channel resides in one of a wireless return network, a PSTN, a return-on-cable network and a router return network.

19/ 43. (New) The method as recited in claim 38 wherein said downstream channel resides in said shared medium, and wherein said shared medium comprises one of a wireless broadcast network, a direct broadcast satellite network and a CATV network, and said upstream channel resides in one of a wireless return network, a PSTN, a return-on-cable network and a router return network. --

REMARKS

The additional claims provide alternative protection for applicants' invention by re-characterizing the manner of suppressing or discarding acknowledgment packets.